



Spring 2003
Volume 3, Issue 2

Inside This Issue

- 1 In the Spotlight
- 1 New Contracts
- 2 Buyer Insight
- 2 County Government Day
- 3 FAQ's
- 3 Special Events
- 4 Noteworthy

Cyd V. Grimes, C.P.M.
Purchasing Agent

TRAVIS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT

County Judge Samuel T. Biscoe
Pct. 1 Commissioner Ron Davis
Pct. 2 Commissioner Karen Sonleitner
Pct. 3 Commissioner Gerald Daugherty
Pct. 4 Commissioner Margaret Gomez

TRAVIS COUNTY PURCHASING BOARD

Pct. 4 County Commissioner
Margaret Gomez, Chairperson
Pct. 3 County Commissioner Gerald Daugherty
353rd District Ct. Judge Lora Livingston
201st District Ct. Judge Suzanne Covington
331st District Ct. Judge Bob Perkins

TRAVIS COUNTY PURCHASING QUARTERLY

Sylvia Lopez, Contributing Editor
Jorge Talavera, Designer/Writer

Travis County Purchasing Office
314 West 11th Street, Suite 400
Austin, Texas 78701
(512) 854-9700

Travis County Purchasing Quarterly

In the Spotlight Cyd Grimes, C.P.M.

By Jorge Talavera

The walls are purple and sunlight beams through a large window lighting up a Native American "dream catcher" that hangs in Cyd Grimes' office. A serene environment for a place where weighty decisions involving millions of county tax dollars are made daily.

Cyd has been the Travis County Purchasing Agent for 10 years, the first female and the longest tenured purchasing agent in the county's history. A grand accomplishment for someone who "never knew what I wanted to be. I was fun loving, wanted to have a good time, and be around people."

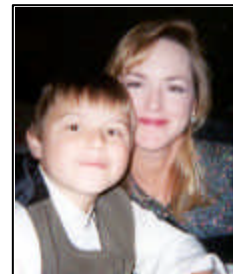
Now, she oversees the county's procurement processes, which directly impacts taxpayers' tax dollars. "There's only one County Purchasing Agent...and I feel truly honored and lucky. It is the best job in the county," says Cyd, but certainly not

the easiest.

"Every aspect is challenging because Purchasing is always working under a deadline with a constant flow of work and daily crises." Of all her responsibilities however, Cyd finds

managing staff to be the most difficult, because "it's hard to criticize, to tell someone they're not doing a good job...or to terminate someone because I have to."

From testifying at the Capitol on legislation to dealing with sticky contract disputes, "the more of a crisis it is, the more determined I am to get it done," she says. It should be reassuring that the person directing an office that spends an average of \$200 million tax dollars per year is "very frugal" with her own money. "I'm responsible to save taxpayers' money and



See Spotlight on Page 4

New...TXMAS Contract, Source for Rubber Stamps, Pager Rental Pricing

By Jorge Talavera

A recently negotiated Texas Multiple Award Schedule (TXMAS) contract allows Travis County to purchase thousands of items at a considerable discount and receive Certified Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) credit in the process.

TXMAS contracts are an alternative purchasing method that the Texas Building and Procurement Commission has established: the use of multiple award schedule contracts that have been competitively awarded by the federal government or any other governmental entity of any state.

As the responsible federal entity, the General Services Administration's (GSA) Federal Supply Service awards all Federal Supply Schedule contracts by competitive procurement procedures for more than 50 schedules that cover multiple commodities and services.

This means that purchases against TXMAS contract #2-539030 meet competitive bidding requirements and, since Grainger, Inc. has partnered with HUB vendor Burgoon as an authorized distributor, counts as 100% HUB dollars.

Effective 8/26/2002-11/30/03, purchases must still be made through the Purchasing Office, but departments can easily browse through products ranging from hand and power tools to safety and security supplies, all on the internet.

Burgoon boasts no order limits, consistent and competitive pricing, and free standard shipping for all registered users. Authorized entities like Travis County are not obligated to procure products from this TXMAS contract, and the contract should not be construed to prevent the purchase of products or services using other procurement methods.

See New on Page 2

Buyer *INSIGHT* Lori Clyde

Lori Clyde is paying extra close attention to the county's maintenance agreements.

Maintenance agreements are negotiated to provide ongoing service and support for mostly high-tech products and services such as fax machines and computer hardware and software.

Perhaps because companies are attempting to compensate for a lagging economy, the county has started seeing some dramatic increases in renewal rates and other associated fees during negotiations. A five to 15 percent increase by a supplier could be viewed as a means of driving revenue via maintenance agreements, which makes a buyer in Lori's position particularly watchful.

Some contracts allow a five percent increase but Purchasing is aiming to limit annual increases to 3 percent.

Through "strategic planning and effective negotiations," Lori has been implementing initiatives that are making agreements more "efficient and streamlined."

"You just have to look at the fine print...and the bottom line," says Lori.

Initiatives include making contracts "coterminous," or prorating contract terms to synchronize expiration dates, and consolidating multiple contracts.

There are vendors that have multiple contracts with different departments, and there are even departments that have multiple contracts with one vendor. In one instance, the county had three separate contracts with one vendor, two of them with a single department, all with different expirations. By making the contracts "coterminous," Purchasing effectively simplified the tracking and renewal of

these contracts.

"It's just more efficient to contact a vendor once for multiple items than contacting that vendor multiple times throughout the year," says Lori.

A consolidated maintenance agreement reached in January with IBM business partner Mark III, covers hardware maintenance; software subscriptions, or annual software updates; and support lines, or customer hardware and software support. This will save the county approximately \$100,000 over the previous multiple contracts, and as an added value is being procured from a Certified HUB.

What can departments do to help? Focus on seeking and identifying multiple contracts that can be consolidated, and continue to do what is already being done, "being receptive and willing to be flexible." Q

Link up...to helpful purchasing information on the Web.

www.capitalmetro.com/Business/dbe_certified.pdf – view a listing of all current Capital Metro Certified Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs), which Travis County recognizes as Certified Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUBs)

www.ci.austin.tx.us/purchase/default.htm – view current purchasing notices and standard bid documents, search for vendors, and download the Certified Minority Vendor List, also recognized by the county as Certified HUBs

www.utexas.edu/ftp/depts/purchasing/index.html – provides an array of resources and information about the University of Texas' Purchasing Department and contains links to various university, state and local public purchasing entities' websites

New · Continued from Page 1

All rubber stamps should now be purchased from Texas Marking Products, vendor number 57707. As of 10/24/02, contract 02T00276RG replaces contract 00T0013-RG with City Stamp and Seal Company. The new contract also covers the purchase of nameplates. Texas Marking Products is also a Certified woman-owned HUB vendor.

As per contract 00T0105-RG, pricing for the rental of pagers has increased slightly, applicable to all pager rental costs.

The increase is allowed by the contract and is effective in March of each year. Many departments have already become aware of the increases, but for those that have not, the contract with Metrocall, Inc., has been in effect since May 2000.

Questions about the rental of pagers can be directed to Rose Garcia at 854-9763. Q

County Government Day Festivities Held at Capitol

Printed with the Permission of the Texas Association of Counties www.county.org

On April 9, county officials got a first-hand look at the legislature in action and the opportunity to voice their concerns or support to legislation that would impact county operations.

April 6 – 12, 2003 is National County Government Week, an annual celebration of county government aimed at raising public awareness and understanding about the roles and responsibilities of the nation's counties.

A full day was planned at the Capitol. It started at 8 a.m. with the House County Affairs Committee Meeting in Capitol Extension in Room E 2-0216. At 9 a.m. county officials, including our very own Purchasing Agent, had coffee with Lt. Gov. David

Dewhurst in the Lt. Governor's Reception Room off the hallway behind the Senate Chamber of the Capitol. Afterwards, resolutions were read in both the House and Senate chambers recognizing county government.

At lunch, the Texas Association of Counties treated county officials and legislators to barbecue on the capitol grounds. Afterwards, county officials dispersed to visit legislative members in their offices.

County officials were encouraged to come early to attend a reception during the evening of April 8 to honor freshman legislators from 5 -7 p.m. at the Austin Club.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What are the most common types of errors made on submitted bids?

A: "Most errors happen because vendors don't read their bid documentation carefully," according to Richard Villareal, Purchasing Agent Assistant III. "Not providing bids in triplicate, incomplete HUB documentation and overlooking notarizations on the ethics affidavit form are the most common," says Richard. Taking exceptions to the bid, (i.e. changing provided units of measure or adding unsolicited items) which results in a non-responsive bid, is also a frequent mistake.

Q: What are "liquidated damages?"

A: "Liquidated damages are the costs that the Owner (County) suffers or incurs for every day beyond what was expected to be the completion date of a project," says David Moreno, Purchasing Agent Assistant IV. "Liquidated damages are specified up front in the contract and an amount equal to the liquidated damages times the number of days is deducted from funds due the contractor. A contractor

must be notified by the Owner (County) prior to the assessment of liquidated damages." An example would be the cost of rent to lease a building if the occupants are unable to move to a new building being constructed for their occupancy. In this case, liquidated damages would be the daily rate for rent plus any other costs (administrative) associated as a result of a contractor's failure to complete the project on time as per the contract requirements.

Q: Do difficult economic times affect how Travis County purchases?

A: In tough times, private entities are affected substantially because of the reduced spending and financial activity. Counties, however, must continue to provide necessary services to their citizens, and taxes must continue to be paid, meaning purchasing operations are affected minimally, and in limited areas. One positive change is the increased pool of competing vendors resulting from fewer private sector opportunities, which leads to increased competition, more competitive pricing and ultimately a tax dollar savings. *Q*

Purchasing Staff Phone List

Main Number (512) 854-9700

Purchasing Agent	Cyd Grimes	854-9761
Asst. Purchasing Agent	Frank Holder	854-9451
Asst. Purchasing Agent	Bonnie Floyd	854-4173
Business Sys. Consultant	Scott Worthington	854-4851
HUB Coordinator	Sylvia Lopez	854-4561
HUB Specialist	Jorge Talavera	854-9914
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Lolly Jones	854-4204
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Lori Clyde	854-4205
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Rose Garcia	854-9763
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Loren Breland	854-4854
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Steve Parks	854-9764
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Richard Villareal	854-4881
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Lou Britt	854-4852
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Jason Walker	854-4562
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Eric Francois	854-9853
Purchasing Agent Asst. II	Donald Rollack	854-4853
Purchasing Agent Asst. I	Vacant	854-9760
P.A.'s Executive Assistant	Lana Boling	854-9766
Purchasing Clerk IV	Melissa Hanson	854-9915
Purchasing Clerk III	Juan Gonzalez	854-9916
Purchasing Clerk III	Elsa Uresti	854-9917
Purchasing Clerk II	Betty Chapa	854-9918
Fixed Asset Manager	Ron Dube	854-6458
Warehouse Supervisor	Dan Rollie	854-6459
Fixed Asset Associate	Matt Phillips	854-6459
Purchasing Agent Asst. IV	Marvin Brice	854-9765
Purchasing Agent Asst. IV	Sylvia Gonzalez	854-5860
Purchasing Agent Asst. IV	David Moreno	854-4850
Purchasing Agent Asst. IV	Jerry Raisch	854-9724

REQUIEM FOR SOULS ALOFT

To whom the gift of flight is given
Through ionosphere and stratosphere riven
We gaze with wonder and sometimes fright
At pioneers of those spatial flights
And yet with pride our being glows
That man beyond the boundary grows
For it is not without harm or grueling strife
Or even the sundering of precious life
But those whose wings can stretch to a star
And soar with bravery crossing the bar
We salute with love and longing dear
That we too could fly but linger here
To brave the heights and dare the dangers
They are the men and women - harbingers
The Challengers

-Donald Rollack

Quarterly Quote

"When a man finds no peace within himself, it is useless to seek it elsewhere."

-Anonymous

Special Events Calendar

Austin
April 22, 2003

HUB Annual Vendor Fair

Hosted by:

The University of Texas System and
The University of Texas at Austin

Location & Time:

Frank Erwin Center
9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

For more information contact:

Annette Smith at (512) 471-2850 or
annettesmith@mail.utexas.edu

Laredo
May 4-5, 2003

Laredo/South Texas Small Business
Opportunity Forum

Sponsored by:

Texas A&M International University;
Texas A&M University, Kingsville
Texas A&M University, Corpus Christi

Location & Time:

Texas A&M International University Campus
Student Center Ballroom

Registration begins at 8:00 a.m.

For more information contact:

Debbie Segovia at (956) 326-2351 or
dsegovia@tamiu.edu

Austin
May 20, 2003

Health and Human Services HUB
Forum

Sponsored By:

Texas Rehabilitation Commission; Health
and Human Services Commission; Texas
Department on Aging; and the
Interagency Council on Early Childhood
Intervention; among others

Location & Time:

Brown-Healy Building
4900 North Lamar Boulevard

For more information contact:

David Camarillo or Debra Pendley at
(512) 424-4386 or
david.camarillo@rehab.state.tx.us
debrapendley@rehab.state.tx.us

Spotlight - Continued from Page 1

spend it wisely,” which is where her personal philosophy finds its way into her job. “I’m a penny pincher!” she says proudly.

Cyd knows that Purchasing serves as a control function but primarily sees her office’s role as a support function. “What county government buys varies so much, from gravel to helicopters to professional services,” she says shaking her head. “We support the varied missions of every elected official in the county and buy for every office.”

“But I don’t have to be an engineer, helicopter pilot, or sheriff’s deputy...I just have to be able to gather information and know the right questions to ask,” which, thanks to an extended network, she excels at doing. “I know the right people to call to get information.” Cyd thinks of herself as a “generalist, not a specialist.” “Purchasing agents know a little bit about everything...or at least we think we do.”

As a child in Nederland, Cyd was raised in a neighborhood where she was outnumbered by older males, and was often “terrorized by a bunch of boys.” She learned to stand up for herself and remembers standing up for the underdogs.

“I was a tomboy,” Cyd admits. Raised with two older brothers, one 10 years older, one five years older, whom she now refers to as her “Aggie Republican brothers,” she did not understand why her father gave her so much responsibility as a child, telling her to take up for herself. “I know now he did me a favor by making me make my own decisions. It made me even more independent and a good decision-maker,” she says gratefully.

An “eternal optimist,” Cyd approaches life with the mentality that “nothing can’t be fixed.” Having a good sense of humor and brimming with self-confidence is what she feels makes her a successful Purchasing Agent, and “loving challenges and being hardheaded” drives her through her day.

But ultimately compassion is what she prides herself on. “If you’re not a sincere, caring, compassionate person, you won’t be successful. You have to genuinely care...and everything else falls into place.”

There are many accomplishments Cyd is proud of achieving in her career. Organizing fixed assets from “an embarrassment” to a highly organized and efficient means of storing, recycling and liquidating surplus property is one of her achievements. Two others are implementing a HUB program and creating the purchasing procedures and fixed assets manuals.

What makes her feel rewarded is, “people in the county telling me I did a good job, that people feel I am conscientious, trying to be flexible but ensuring we’re in compliance with the law.” Cyd is also honored by requests such as those from the UT LBJ School of Public Affairs to be a regular speaker on county purchasing laws and issues.

But her proudest achievements and goals in life revolve around someone else, her 9-year-old son, Jackson. Cyd’s most important long-term goal: “To be a great mom and raise Jackson to be a fine person...happy and well rounded. God blessed me...so that’s going to be an easy task.”

Cyd’s eyes light up when she talks about her only son and child. She tears up and smiles widely as she rattles off the traits she sees in Jackson as he grows older.

“Observant, cautious, aware, empathetic, and compassionate,” are the first to come to mind, with the latter being the most important to her because she believes that sensitivity to others cannot be forced.

“He was born to be special...I think he’s going to be a four-star general,” she says, although he prefers turntables to top commander right now, as his current aspiration is to be a deejay.

And though a stoic demeanor and unbreakable confidence is what most see of Cyd, as one Purchasing employee puts it, “under the steel and concrete exterior, a job requirement to be a County Purchasing Agent, is a sensitive, caring and compassionate person.”

NOTEWORTHY...

The Purchasing Office was recognized in Commissioners Court on March 4th in honor of “Public Purchasing Month” in Travis County. A proclamation was read aloud and staff members convened in court to be recognized for their contributions in “making the most of precious tax dollars,” and “fostering a fair and competitive solicitation process.”

Dan Rollie and Matt Phillips of the Purchasing Office’s Fixed Assets department accepted an award in Commissioners Court commending their contributions in recycling county surplus property. Efforts in recycling items such as desks, chairs and cabinets have saved the county approximately \$745,000 to date.

The HUB Office would like to extend a very special thanks to active supporters of the HUB program who requested HUBs to include in the solicitation process this quarter. Among those were John Carr, Lori Clyde, Sylvia Gonzalez, David Moreno, Donald Rollack, Leslie Stricklan and Richard Villareal.

The HUB Office met with several vendors to shed light on the purchasing process. Look for these newly registered HUB vendors to assist with your needs: Arrow Paint and Paint Supply, Complete Pest Control, EcoGeo, Kokel Co., M & E Multi Floor Care, MPress Printing, Read Industrial Supply Company (Risco), Blackhawk Enterprise, Flores Trucking, LeeAnn Cleaning Service, Payne Electric Company and Power Clean.

The Travis County Purchasing Quarterly is a work in progress that will continue to grow and improve.

We are always open to your suggestions so please feel free to email your ideas to jorge.talavera@co.travis.tx.us.

We at the Travis County Purchasing Office are striving to improve our service to you. Please let us know how we can better serve you.



When visiting the Purchasing Office, to ensure that you are serviced efficiently, please stop at the front desk. All documents will be logged in, date stamped and distributed appropriately. If you need to speak with a staff member, someone in the Purchasing Office will be happy to assist you.